

Raval Pir to Panchatiya village. These birds were obviously on their way to their wintering grounds.

JUBILEE GROUND,
BHUI, KUTCH,
August 12, 1978.

M. K. HIMMATSINHJI

10. THE COMMON HAWK-CUCKOO, *CUCULUS VARIUS* VAHL
IN KUTCH

The Common Hawk-Cuckoo or Brainfever Bird is found practically all over the country, and I have heard and seen it quite often in Saurashtra (Wankaner) and elsewhere in India. However, I had never come across it in Kutch until 23rd August this year. So far as I know, Dr. Sálím Ali has not recorded it here during his surveys

prior to the publication of the BIRDS OF KUTCH. Thus this sighting of *Cuculus varius* by me seems to be the first record for the area, at least after the publication of the list of birds recorded by Stoliczka and Hume (BIRDS OF KUTCH, p. 171).

I am inclined to put this bird down as an extremely rare visitor or a vagrant into Kutch.

JUBILEE GROUND,
BHUI, KUTCH,
September 1, 1978.

M. K. HIMMATSINHJI

11. A NEW NESTING SITE OF COMMON MYNA, *ACRIDOTHERES TRISTIS* (LINNAEUS), IN THE PUNJAB

(With two photographs)

The common myna, *Acridotheres tristis* (Linnaeus), has been reported to nest in holes in trees, rock faces, vertical earth banks, walls of buildings and wells (Whistler 1963, Ali and Ripley 1972 and Ganguly 1975). Occasionally it also builds untidy nests in trees. During July 1977, this bird was seen exploiting a different nesting site in the Punjab. We saw this bird making use of wheat hay stacks for nesting purposes. A wheat hay stack is locally known as *kup*, a dome shaped structure about 3 to 4.5 metres high and approximately of the same diameter (Photo.1).

Only one pair of birds usually nests in a *kup*. The mynas make a slit at the top of the *kup* by pulling out straw and an entrance hole is made at the bottom of the slit (Photo.2). There is sufficient place for laying eggs and raising young inside the hole. The eggs are laid directly on the flat platform of hay. However, in some nests it was observed that the bird had placed a few dry leaves and feathers.

This nesting site was discovered accidentally on 9th July, 1977 in an agricultural farm at village Darawan, Distt. Jullundur (Punjab). Examinations of the nest in the *kup* revealed



Photo.1. A *kup* showing entrance hole of common myna nest at its top.

the presence of five eggs of the common myna on the flat platform of wheat hay. On the same day, all *kups* of that village were examined and the majority of these had common myna nests.

In 1978, during mid-July to mid-August,

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286 *kups* were observed at random in the districts of Hoshiarpur, Jullundur and Ludhiana. Out of these, 151 contained nests of common myna. This number clearly indicates a change in the nesting behaviour of this bird which is probably due to the changed ecological conditions.

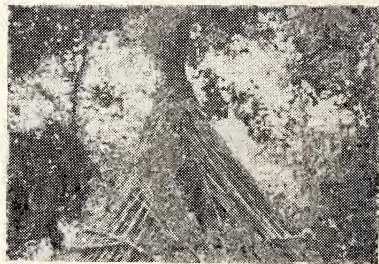


Photo.2. Top portion of the same *kup* (enlarged) showing common myna coming out of the nest.

The nest in the *kup* is well protected against rain and sun and is not easily approached by predators. Even if rain water penetrates to some extent, the structures quickly dry up owing to their porous nature. Besides this, the birds need not collect nesting material, and can lay eggs directly on hay. In using other nesting sites, mynas are known to stuff nesting holes with twigs, roots, tow and rubbish (Ali & Ripley 1972).

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